

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 02969 061420Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 MCT-02 HA-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00

ICAE-00 INRE-00 PA-01 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 /053 W

-----123240 061428Z /46

O R 061341Z SEP 78

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7162

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USSOUTHCOM QUARRY HTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 2969

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, UY

SUBJ: PROMINENT OPPOSITION LEADER'S WIFE DIES OF APPARENT  
TERRORIST POISONING

1. THE WIFE OF BLANCO TRIUMVIRATE MEMBER MARIO HEBER USHER  
DIED OF APPARENT POISONING MID-DAY SEPT. 5 AFTER DRINKING  
FROM ONE OF THREE "GIFT" BOTTLES OF WINE ADDRESSED TO PARTY  
LEADERS DAYS PREVIOUSLY.

2. ACCORDING TO BLANCO DELEGATION WHICH CALLED ON POLOFF  
SHORTLY FOLLOWING DEATH, BOTTLES WERE FOUND ON BACK DOOR-  
STEP OF EX-LEGISLATOR LUIS A. LACALLE HERRERA ON MORNING  
OF AUGUST 29. ADDRESSED TO LACALLE, HEBER, AND FELLOW TRI-  
UMVIR CARLOS JULIO PEREYRA, THEY WERE ACCCOMPANIED BY NOTE  
READING: "THURSDAY THE 31ST AT MID-DAY LET US DRINK TO  
THE NATION IN ITS NEW STAGE." NOTE WAS SIGNED "M. DE N."  
AS THIS WAS PERIOD OF HEAVY RUMORS REGARDING IMMINENT POLITICAL  
CHANGES, RECIPIENTS ASSUMED BOTTLES WERE A FRIENDLY TIP-OFF  
OR JEST FROM A PARTISAN.

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PAGE 02 MONTEV 02969 061420Z

3. OF THREE BOTTLES, THE FIRST WAS OPENED ON SEPT. 3 BY  
LACALLE, BUT THROWN AWAY BECAUSE OF A "PREMONITION" OF HIS  
WIFE. SECOND BOTTLE OPENED WAS HEBER'S. WHEN HE WAS  
UNEXPECTEDLY UNABLE TO LUNCH AT HOME SEPT. 5, HIS WIFE REPORT-  
EDLY DRANK A SMALL AMOUNT ALONE, BECAME VIOLENTLY ILL AND,  
IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, FELL DEAD. REMAINDER OF THIS BOTTLE

WAS TAKEN BY POLICE, WHILE PEREYRA'S UNOPENED BOTTLE (WITH SMALL HOLE IN CORK INDICATING POSSIBLE INJECTION OF FOREIGN SUBSTANCE) WAS TURNED OVER TO HIGH-LEVEL JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES. RESULTS OF AUTOPSY ARE NOT YET KNOWN. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO LACALLE, PRIVATE LAB TESTS OF BOTTLE HE RECEIVED SHOWED EVIDENCE OF POISON.

4. EARLY MORNING SEPT. 6, AUTHORITIES ISSUED THREE COMMUNIQUES WHICH APPEARED IN ALL MORNING DAILIES SUBSTANTIALLY CONFIRMING INFORMATION PROVIDED BY BLANCOS, INCLUDING FACT THAT BOTTLES CONTAINED HIGHLY TOXIC PHOSPHATE-BASED POISON --FOSDRIN. COMMUNIQUES ALSO CALLED ON POPULATION FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO POSSIBLE SUSPECTS IN CRIME.

5. COMMENT: BLANCO PARTY MEMBERS ARE ALREADY CONVINCED THAT MRS. HEBER WAS VICTIM OF A TERRORIST ACT, AND THAT ITS PERPETRATORS ARE THE ULTRA-RIGHTISTS. THE GOU'S MODERATES, WHO GAINED GROUND OVER THE EXTREMISTS IN THE GEN. PRANTL AFFAIR, NOW FACE ANOTHER CRISIS. THEY MUST MOVE RAPIDLY AND FORCEFULLY BY A POLITICAL ACT AND/OR THROUGH THEIR INVESTIGATION OF THIS CASE TO PROVE TO DOUBTERS THAT THEY ARE SEEKING THE PERPETRATORS. OUR INFORMATION IS THAT THE POLICE ARE TAKING THIS CASE VERY RPT VERY SERIOUSLY. WIRE SERVICES ARE GIVING THE STORY HEAVY PLAY. EXILES ABROAD WILL UN-QUESTIONABLY SEIZE UPON IT TO ADD ANOTHER BLOT TO URUGUAY'S IMAGE.

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PAGE 03 MONTEV 02969 061420Z

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PGOV, PINT, UY, BLANCO TRIUMVIRATE, (HEBER USHER, MARIO)  
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